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READER:

T *HIS* Discourse was preach'd without any the least thought of its being made more publick. And a considerable time pass'd afterwards, without any such Intention. I thought it, indeed, too uncompos'd, to appear in the World: But in a matter of no worse Consequence, I make no difficulty of acknowledging, that I at length chose rather to follow the Judgment of the many Hearers that mov'd for this further Publication, than my own. Therefore, amidst much other Business, and great Infirmities, that are sufficiently monitory to me, to be unconcerned

To the Reader.

concerned for the gratifying of Curiosity, in my self, or in any others: I so far revis'd it, as very imperfect Memorials would enable me.

If any where, it be somewhat enlarged, that can be no prejudice to them that heard it; much less to them that heard it not.

That it may be of some use to direct our Thanksgivings (and Supplications also) so as, without the neglect of lower and subservient Mercies, they may have principal respect to Blessings of the highest value, is the serious Desire, and Prayer of

An earnest well-willer to the true Prosperity of the Christian Church

Nov. 16..1703.

18 AU 65

J. H.

A

SERMON

Preached on

November 5th. 1703.

COL. I. 13.

Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness; and hath translated us into the Kingdom of his dear Son.

YOU already know that the Occasion of our assembling together this day is twofold;

To commemorate some former National Mercies, and deliverances from certain very considerable efforts of that power of darkness, which is peculiar to the Devils Kingdom. And also,

B

To

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To prepare for the Commemoration, at the approaching Season, of the much more general Mercy of

our common Redemption, in the observation of a Solemn Rite belonging to the Kingdom of Christ*.

* It being our usual Monthly Season of Preparation for the Lord's Supper.

The two parts of this Text, give us an apt and suitable ground for each of these.

For giving God thanks for great former Mercies; And preparation for that designed holy Solemnity.

We begin, for the former of these purposes, with the first part of the Text. [*Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness.*] And that we may see how accommodate this will be to the former mentioned purpose, (as comprehended within the import of this clause; and but comprehended, it being of much greater Latitude) some things I must previously note to you. As,

1. That there is a Kingdom manifestly imply'd in these words, [*the power*] of darkness, unto which the Kingdom

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Kingdom of Gods dear Son is opposite.

And,

2. That *this Kingdom* can be no other than the *Devils Kingdom*, whom our Lord himself doth own to have a Kingdom. *If Satan be divided against himself, how then can his Kingdom stand,* Matt. 12. 26. These are our Lords own Words, and joyned in that Context, with what sufficiently intimates *that Kingdom* to be directly opposite to *his own*.

3 That the *distinguishing Characters* of these two opposite Kingdoms, the *Kingdom of the Devil*, and the *Kingdom of Gods dear Son*, are *Darkness*, and *Light*. The one is a *Kingdom of Darkness*, and the other is a *Kingdom of Light*. The Devils are called the Rulers of the former, so stigmatiz'd, Ephes. 6. 12. *Principalities, and Powers, and the Rulers of the Darkness of this World*. Our Lord's is imply'd to be a *Kingdom of Light*, in the Words immediately foregoing, *Giving thanks unto the Father, who hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the*

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Saints in Light; who hath delivered us from the Power of Darkness, &c. It is a Kingdom they are to inherit, Matt. 25. 34. In its most perfect state it comprehends brightest light, purity, and glory, as the opposite Kingdom Consummate, is utter darkness. And so are the beginnings, and first principles of each. Ye were darkness, now are light in the Lord--Eph. 5. 8. Both are seen, in the Unconverted, and Converted State. To turn them from darkness to light; and (which shows that darkness to be Satanical) from the Power of Satan unto God, Act. 26. 18. As what their inheritance is, hereupon, to be, the next words shew, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them that are sanctify'd. And yet again,

- 4 That the *Darkness* which characterizes the *Devils Kingdom*, includes those things that are directly opposite unto those included in the *light*, which characterizes the *Kingdom of Christ*. The light that characterizes the *Kingdom of Christ* includes

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cludes these *two things*, { *Truth* and *Holiness*.

These are the *principal things*, comprehended in the notion of *light*, as it is characteristical of the *Kingdom of the Son of God*. The *light of truth*, objectively revealed, and subjectively received, the *Frame of Christian Doctrine*, with the *knowledge and belief* thereof; And the *light of holiness*, so shining in the *Lives of Christians* that Men may see their good works—

Matt. 5. 16. Accordingly the *darkness* that doth characterize the *Devil's Kingdom* doth comprehend in

it, { *Falshood* and *Wickedness*.

It comprehends in it all manner of *falshood*, *truth obscured and perverted*, *ignorance*, *error*, *deceit*, *blindness of heart*, Eph. 4. 18. a wilfull overlooking of the great and most necessary truths, which the *Souls of Men* are, above all other, concerned to take in and admit into their *inward parts*. And

it comprehends *wickedness* in the whole compass of it; *wickedness against God*, all manner of impiety, idolatry, blasphemy, neglect, and profanation of the Ordinances and Institutions, wherein he claims to be worshipped, in the proper Seasons thereof. *Wickedness against Men*, all comprehended and summ'd up in *their hatred of one another*. He that hateth his Brother is in *darkness, even diabolical*. For they who emerge, and are recovered out of it, are said, to have overcome the wicked one. 1 Job. 2. 11, 13. And both these sorts of *wickedness* are put together, Rom. 12. 12, 13. Let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light. And those works of darkness are said to be *chambering, wantonness, rioting, drunkenness, strife and envying*. And Eph. 5. 11. We are warned to have no fellowship with the unfruitfull works of darkness, but rather reprove them. Which works are, vers. 3, and 4. said to be *fornication, uncleanness, covetousness*, (which is also said to be *idolatry*) *filthiness, foolish talking,*

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talking, &c. as things that barr us from any inheritance in the Kingdom of Christ, or of God. And Christians are therefore forbidden to be partakers therein, ver. 7. because they are light, and Children of Light, ver. 8. And as 'tis, 1 Theff. 5. 5. of the Day, not of the Night, nor of Darkness. They are of the opposite Kingdom, and must walk comfortably thereto.

Our way being thus far plain we go onto add,

5. That the Power which the Devil exerts and exercises in this darkness is twofold, First, Spiritual and Internal. Secondly, Secular and External.

1. There is a Spiritual Power which he exercises in this darkness, acting more immediately upon the Minds and Spirits of Men. The God of this World blinds their Minds who Believe not. 2 Cor. 4. 4. And he is said to be the Spirit that works in the Children of Disobedience. Ephes. 2. 2. And the impenitent, such as have not hitherto repented and turned to God, it is said he leads them captive at his Will. 2 Tim. 2. 26. And

B 4

2. There

mo 2. There is a *Secular Power* which he also exerts in the midst of that darkness that he hath brought upon this World, relating, as far as he can obtain leave, to the Bodies of Men, and their external concernments and affairs, and not only of particular Persons, but of Nations and Kingdoms; especially where he observes any design, to be more directly formed against his Kingdom and Interest in this World; he thereupon comes to be engaged in a more open and explicate opposition. And so when he is the Author of this or that bodily or outward affliction to a particular Person, as he can obtain Divine permission, this is an effort of his Power in the midst of that darkness. Such as are rescued out of his Kingdom, his design is to vex, because he cannot destroy them, whom he cannot mortally touch, viz. Such as are Born of God, and have a new Nature, by that Divine Birth, *the wicked one touches them not*, 1 Joh. 5. 18. i. e. not mortally to make them *Sin unto Death*, as vers. 16. But if he can however have

leave

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leave to touch them in their bodies or external concernments, he will rather do that than nothing. Ruine them he cannot, but he will afflict them as he can. Therefore is he said to go about like a roaring Lion, seeking whom he may devour, which is there meant, immediately, in reference to their external concernments, as will appear, if you observe the context. 1 Pet. 5. 8. For it follows in the 9th. ver. *Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your Brethren that are in the World.* 'Tis true, being uncertain of the event, he hath a further aim to overthrow their Faith, and by his roaring to fright them out of their Religion. Therefore 'tis said; *whom resist stedfast in the Faith.* Defeat his final design. But, as the means to his End, when he roars like a Lion, against any of the Servants of Christ, it is with design to bring them into the most afflicted condition he can, that so he may, at least, make them signify the less in that state of opposition wherein they are engaged against

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against him in the World. So you find the imprisonment of Christs Servants imputed to Satan. *Rev. 2. 10. The Devil shall cast some of you into Prison and you shall have tribulation for ten Days, which some understand of the ten Persecutions. Whatever the Devil meant, God intended their trial as there said, and the demonstration of the victorious Power of the Divine Principle, their Faith, and his Spirit in them, that being try'd, it might be found unto praise and glory—1 Pet. 1: 7* And we cannot doubt but he let Job come on the Stage, as his Champion to combat Satan; who was the prime Author of his manifold Calamities his accuser first, and his persecutor afterwards. He accuseth him of want of Integrity, *Doth Job serve God for nought. ch. 1. 9.* and at the same time complains of his own want of Power to come at him. *Hast thou not made a hedge about him, and about his House and about all that he hath on every side ver. 10.* Whereupon, for the trial of Jobs fidelity and patience, God puts all

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he had into the *Devils Power*, his Person only excepted, which as yet he must not touch; manifest therefore it is, the Devil animated the *Sabeans* and *Chaldeans* to take away his *Oxen* and *Asses*, and to slay his *Servants* with the edge of the *Sword*. ver. 14, 15, 18. that kindled the fire in the (lower) *Heavens*, that burnt up his *sheep* and other *Servants*, ver. 16. that raised the *Storm* from the *Wilderness*, that smote the four *Corners* of the *House*, where his *Sons* and his *Daughters* were *Eating*, and *Drinking*, and *Buried* them in its *Ruines*. ver. 18. And we are expressly told that it was the Devil, upon his enlarged *Licence*, that smote him with those venomous *Boiles*, ch. 2. 7. It was the Devil that bound that *Daughter of Abraham* eighteen *Years*, Luke 13. 16. It was the Devil that brought upon the *Christian Church*, the famed *ten persecutions*, under the *Pagan Roman Empire*, understood to be meant by the great *red Dragon*, Rev. 12. 3. Whence also, he wears that very *Name*, ver. 9. The great *red Dragon* was cast out, that old *Serpent* called

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called the Devil and Satan——These are some of those efforts, amidst that darkness, wherein the Devil hath and uses so great Power. But yet further,

6. It is manifestly a far greater Deliverance to be freed from *his Spiritual Power*, and the horrid effects thereof, than from that which he may use in reference to our outward concernments.

Therefore now, upon these mentioned considerations *on this former part of the Text*, that we may apply it suitably to *our present purpose*, these *two things* are to be asserted and evinced.

1. That to be delivered from the Devils Power in external respects is a real and great Deliverance. But that

2. To be delivered from his Power in Spiritual respects is a much greater Deliverance.

1. That to be delivered from the Devil's Power in External Respects, either Personal or National, is a real and very great Deliverance. We are to look upon that Deliverance, which this Day we more particularly commemorate,

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memorate, now almost an hundred Years ago, as a *defeated* Plot of the Devil. It carries that manifest Aspect with it to every Eye: A Contrivance formed, and designed to be executed, by the Subtilty, and Power, of *the Prince of the Darknes of this World*. I need not repeat the Narrative of it, being sufficiently known to you, or may be read in our Histories: But nothing can be plainer, than that here was a Design and Plot of Hell and Devils, contrived in the dark, and so to have been executed, till the Execution it self, should have brought it to light. For what Darknes, but that of Hell, could have so much Fire in it? so much of destructive Rage and Fury? And tho' there was hazard in the Undertaking, to the *instrumental Actors*, what did the Devil care what became of them? If his main design succeeded, he had been a great gainer, and glutted his ravenous Appetite: If it succeeded not, but turned upon the Heads of Undertakers, he had been no loser, but only *less a gainer*, having
some

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some prey however, to feed, but not *satiare* a devouring Appetite, which must be eternally insatiable. And what can be more Devil-like?

And what was the Deliverance, by which God did again signalize *this very Day*, fifteen Years ago, but a Repetition of the same Mercy? The same in substance, tho' different in Circumstance. It was from the same Enemy, the same *invisible*, and the same *visible* Enemy, that we were preserved then, and more lately since. And what is our continued Peace and Quiet hitherto, but the same Mercy continued, under the Care and Conduct of our present Sovereign? It is preservation from the same Enemy, and from the Powers of the same Darkness, that we continue hitherto to enjoy.

And this Mercy is not only *real*, but *great*, both in *it self* great, and great in respect of *what it incloses*, and *sub-serves*. In *it self*, for it is preservation from a *great Enemy*, the greatest in all the World. A *daring one*, that not feared to contend, perpetually, with

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the Almighty, and without hope of Self-advantage; who loves Mischief therefore for Mischief's sake, and working with *mighty Power*, and *Power* that works in such Darkness, as to us Mortals is impenetrable.

And *great*, in respect of what it incloses, and is *subservient unto*; for it incloses the precious Gospel of our Lord yet continued unto us, and all the Ordinances thereof, and all the gracious Communications we partake in, by and through them; and is *subservient to their* true and proper design: And therefore Mercy of that kind ought to be look'd upon as *real*, and *very great*, which way soever you consider it. We should therefore take heed of being guilty of so vile Ingratitude, as not to commemorate, with a suitable Impression upon our Spirits, this sort of Mercies, which were the Foundation of the Mercies we have in so long a course enjoyed: For former Mercies are fundamental to later ones. The Expression is very emphatical, and worthy our most serious regard, which

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which we have, *Psal. 89. 2. For I have said, Mercy shall be built up for ever.* And how is Mercy said to be *built up*, but as former Mercies are fundamental to later ones? Thus are the present Mercies that we enjoy *this Day*, founded upon the Mercies of *former Days*, such as we ought joyfully and thankfully to recount, with delight and praise; remembering *the years of the right hand of the most High.* But yet

2. I must also note to you, that however we are to esteem Mercies of *that kind*, viz. Deliverances from the *external power of the Prince of Darknes*, *real*, and very *great Mercies*; we are yet to account deliverance from the *spiritual power exerted in that darknes*, *much greater.* I hope all your minds and hearts will close with me in this as soon as you hear it, it carrying its own light and evidence in it self. For if you do but compare the cases of *them*, who have been all along the *Authors* of those great calamities and miseries, to the inhabitants of this

lower

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lower world, and especially to the Church of Christ in it, *with theirs* that have been *the sufferers*, upon the most peculiar account; you cannot but say the portion and lot of the *Sufferers* is most unspeakably rather to be chosen. We know who have been the *Authors* of those great Calamities in the World, and in the Church of God in it, for many Ages by-past; the same who were to have been the *Authors* of our intended Destruction.

And in taking a view of their case,
let us consider both their { *Character, and*
both which you may find set down to-
gether in one place, viz. 2 Thes. 9;
10, 11, 12.

i. *Their character*, which really is enough to fright any Man that is but Master of *of his own Reason* to see how, and in what way, they Have abandoned and lost *theirs*, to behold Men so stigmatized, as indeed they have markt out themselves. *They whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all Power*, here is the Devils Power at Work

C

Work

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Work in them, the horrid Cause of their stupendous dementation. The effects do follow; and by them, in signs, and lying wonders, among all which wonders the greatest wonder is themselves; that the thing called Man in them, should be so metamorphos'd, and transform'd, into so Brutal, and Diabolical a Monster! So destitute of understanding, so full of malignity, as we shall further see, by and by. [And all deceivableness of unrighteousness.] So far their character is continued, and it partly, further follows, interwoven with some part of their present doom, as also their final doom is both interserted, and distinctly exprest. Therefore take in to their Character, their being under strong Delusion, the Energie of Deceit, as the Greek signifies, to believe a lie, spoken indefinitely, to note, that any the most absurd figment they can be impos'd upon to believe, (That God sends them, as belonging to their doom, we shall consider afterward.)

And we might enlarge their Character by taking in from, ver. 3. that they

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are Apostates, such as were fall'n away, from a State of Excellency; and, spoken of, as one Person, from their Oneness in Spirit, and Design, as a Man of Sin, a Son of Perdition, (capable of the the active as well as passive sense. And ver. 4. who opposes exalteth himself above all that is called God, sits in his Temple, is Worshipped as God. And ver. 8. the wicked (or lawless) one.

This is their Character that are and have been through many Centuries of Years, the Authors of the Miseries and Calamities the Church of God hath suffered, and partly doth suffer, and is endanger'd by at this Day.

In this their Character, I shall take notice of two things.

1. Of the great Infatuation that is upon their Minds, and

2. Of the monstrous Degeneracy not from Christianity only, but even from Humanity too, that is to be found in the Temper of their Spirits.

1. The great Infatuation that is upon their Minds. It appears that they are

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under *strong Delusions*, Potent, Efficacious *ones*, they are most effectually deluded. And of this I could give many Instances, but shall content myself only with the Mention of two, As

1. That *great fundamental wild conceit* (which they have laid at the Bottom of their whole *Inchanted Fa-brick*, by which one would wonder, how they could hope to impose any part of the rational World; or could be impos'd upon themselves,) that all the Power they claim and use, to the Disturbance of Mankind and Oppression of the Christian Church, they pretend to have *by deputation* from our Blessed Lord Jesus Christ, and by *Succeſſion* from the Holy Apostle Peter.

By deputation from Christ: As if they were *his Deputies* in doing such monstrous work as this! as if Christ had deputed them to destroy *Christianity*, to render it a *ridiculous thing*, by their inserted *Fooleries*; and odious by their *barbarous Cruelties*! That he
who

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who was the *Light of the World*, should appoint them to overspread it with Darknes! That he who so freely shed his Blood to redeem it, had commission'd them so copiously to shed Human, and Christian Blood. To make, even *his Church*, the Temple of the Living God, a Shambles, and Slaughter-house, and affright the rest of Mankind from coming near it! who yet could be, as little safe in declining it, if they were within the reach of their Arm.

What fearful havock did they make, unprovok'd, in *America*, as soon as they could get any footing there, destroying multitudes of (towards *them*) harmless, innocent Creatures, and who (as Strangers) received them with all possible kindness, even to the number of no less than forty Millions, as hath been acknowledged by some of their own Historians *, their Kings and Princes being put to death, with most exquisite Torture upon the unjustifiable pretence of
C 3 their

* D. Barth. d.
l. Casas B. of
Chiap.

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their being Infidels, but with design to make them confess their Gold and Treasure, which they did but suspect they conceal'd. By these Inhumane Cruelties they laid wast whole fruitful Countries, and turned well-peopled Lands into meer Desarts. And what other tendency could this have, than to engage the Nations of the Earth against Christians, and Christianity it self, as a thing by no means to be endured in the World? And were such multitudes destroyed by Christ's direction, and to propagate the Christian Faith! And what Com-motions, Wars, and Bloodshed did they introduce into that large Coun-try of *Habassia*, disturbing that quiet and peaceful Empire, tho' *Christian*,

* Of which see
Ludolphus, &
at large, D.
Geddes Ethi-
op: Histor.

only because it would not be *Roman* *! And have we not reason to add the many horrid Tragedies acted by them, more with-
in our own nearer notice, in the se-
veral parts of *Europe*, and in this
Kingdom particularly? And that all
this

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this should be pretended to be done by a Power derived from Christ! in so open, and contemptuous opposition to the Laws, and Spirit of Christ! the design of his coming into this World! and the very *Genius*, and natural tendency of *Christianity* it self! The things themselves are full of black Horrour. But that they should be said to be done in *that* Name, speaks the most monstrous Impudence, and Infatuation! As if Christ had changed Names with the Devil, and laying aside *that* of a Saviour, had chosen to be called *Abaddon*, or *Apoljon*, the common Destroyer of Mankind. And having changed *his Mind*, and his *very Nature*, did now set himself to counter-act, and defeat the Design for which he came into the World!

And that they have this Power by *Succession* from St. Peter, is as idle and absurd a pretence! If he were their *Predecessor*, they were sure very unsuitable *Successors*. Did he ever go before them in such Work? What *Precepts*, what *Footsteps* of his have they

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they followed? Did he ever claim a Power, to annul at his own pleasure, the Laws and Ordinances of his Master, and Lord? to amass Treasures, to accumulate Dignities, acquire ample Revenues? to dispose of Crowns and Scepters, and, as he should think fit, to dethrone, or unthroned the Princes and Potentates of this Earth?

If he had such Power, what is that to them? How came they by it *from him*? was it because he was Bishop of Rome, that therefore the assum'd, usurp'd Name, without the *Apostolical Office*, and the (inseparable) *Spirit, and Spiritual Power, acts, and designs*, could create them *such*. As well might the *Habit make a Monk*, or a *Beard a Philosopher*. By their *Fruits, and Works*, they are to be known.

Our Lord reckon'd himself sufficiently to have refuted *their* vain pretence, who gloried in being *Abraham's Successors*, by telling them, *So did not Abraham, John 8. 40.*

But

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But all their Learning, Wit, and Sophistry, will never answer what hath been written *, to make it highly probable, that St. Peter was never at Rome, much less sate 25 Years there. It must therefore be a *strong Delusion*, must make them build so mighty a Fabrick upon so *infirm* and *weak* a *Foundation*.

* In the modest Enquiry, upon that Subject; a Work, that the Anonymous, the Author needed not be ashamed of, besides what hath been said by divers others.

2. The other thing I shall instance in, is *their worshipping a piece of Bread as a Deity*: What a strange Infatuation is that! that one cannot distinguish a piece of Bread from a God, or an Object of Worship! And to believe this against the most irrefragable reason, and common sense, and without any pretence from Scripture, more plausible than it would be to say, *i. e.* the Sun in the Firmament is a God, or that a Buckler, which one turns with his Hand this way or that, and wherewith Men defend themselves in Battle, is a Deity, or an Object of Worship;

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Worship; because God is said in Scripture, to be a *Sun and a Shield*. With a Thousand like instances that might be given.

2. But we are to consider also, as we proposed, and as belonging to the *Character* of these Men; *The monstrous Degeneracy, from not Christianity only, but also, from Common Humanity itself, that appears in the Temper of their Spirits.*

This Depends upon the *Former*, which could not be spoken of, without some excursion into this; But they are distinct things; and therefore the *latter* requires to be distinctly, but briefly, toucht upon. And *this depravedness of their Spirits*, is that which is unspeakably more horrid, if any thing can be thought to be more so: *i. e.* that *Men*, and who profess themselves *Christians*, could impose it upon themselves, to be so Barbarously Bloudy, and Cruel, to every one that is not so *stupidly foolish* in these things, as themselves; that they would destroy all the Rest of Mankind, if it were in their

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their Power, for not agreeing with them in the same Sentiments, tho' to agree with them, I must disagree with myself, and with all other Men that have yet their *Reason* and their *Senses* left them; and the Faith of Christians, in other points, most essential to Religion. If I will not Believe that they are deputed by Christ, as the Successors of St. Peter; to do what they please in *Secular Governments*, and *Religion*. If I will not Believe a piece of Bread ought to be worship'd as a God; I am to be tortured to death for this my disbelief! which is so horrid a Transformation of an humane Creature, as no power of thought can frame an *idea* of any thing more monstrous throughout the World! viz. a *Christian* because he is so, must be made the common Butcher of Mankind! to destroy as many Humane Lives as he can reach! For if this Treatment be, for this Reason, deserv'd, it ought to take place to our utmost every where. Whence also is to be collected, that Men might, had they not been Christians, have been

been sociable, kind, friendly, and have lived quietly and pleasantly with one another! So that *Christian Religion*, is the *transforming* Principle, and Obliges Men to be the Destroyers of their Brethren, as much as in them lies; and with exquisite Torment, *that of Burning Alive*; such as common Humanity would abhor to use towards a Beast. And, besides, the Tortures of their Inquisition, must be thought a Thousand times worse than Burning for an hour or two!

And let now this matter be impartially considered, doth it not already appear, that the *Authors* of such *Miseries* and *Calamities* to the rest of Men, and the Rest of *Christians*, especially such as are sincere, are in much worse case than the *Poor Sufferers*? We cannot but judge so on the following Accounts.

1. *Here is a Transformation of Minds.* The Minds of Men, of Reasonable Creatures, are transformed into the most horrid things; *i. e.* they are turned, excepting the meer humane shape,
(and

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and every one that understands what belongs to the humane Essence, easily apprehends how little meer external shape doth, to the making of a Man) they are turned into ravenous wild Beasts, into Lions, Tygers, Bears, Wolves, destroying and tearing in pieces whatever comes in their Way! And do but consider, were it not a much more eligible thing, to have the *Nature of Man*, the Understanding of Man, common Humanity, remaining, tho' the external shape were altered; than to have the shape of a Man remaining, but to be in the Temper of ones Mind a Tyger, a Bear, ravaging and destroying wheresoever one goes. Such are set up as Portents, Prodigies, and as monitory Signs, both to astonish Mankind, that the impression may be deeper and more permanent, and thereupon to warn them, seasonably to repress the Beginnings of any such Disposition; fearing whither it may grow. And therefore to consider with dread, how fearful a thing it is, that there should be such a Sort of Creatures,

Creatures, in humane shape, as can take delight in tormenting them that never did or wisht them harm; As with pleasure, can torture others, for no other cause, but meerly because they take the same Liberty of thought, which as a common Right, themselves assume; And cannot be of their Opinion against common Sense, and the common Reason of Mankind, and without pretence any way. If a man were to express his sense as to this matter, in a solemn Prayer to the Almighty, would he not say, Lord, let me rather be the most monstrous deformed Creature, in external shape, that ever was produced in this World; only let me have in me a *Right*, or give me up to a *Reprobate Mind*! And what can we conceive *more Essential* to *Man*, than these two things, *Reason* and *Love*, and both these are abandon'd, and lost, in those Men whose Character hath been given. *Their Reason* and *Love* do, at least suffer the highest violation both together. They Believe themselves, and would have all others believe,

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believe, against the common reason and sense of Men, and are become ha-
rers of Mankind, otherwise than as
they shall fall in with their absurd
Sentiments, and will be subservient to
their cursed Designs.

2. We shall easily be induc'd to
look upon the *Author's Case*, as much
the less eligible, than *the Sufferer's*,
upon this further account; *that this*
horrid degeneracy, and depravedness of
Spirit is most entirely voluntary; and
proceeds from their plenary consent with
the Devil, as an inactuating Spirit in
them. Such is the import of those
tremendous words, (that would make
one shrug to think of them) —*the*
Spirit that inworketh, (or hath ener-
gie) *in the Children of Disobedience*,
Eph. 2. 2.

Their perfect voluntariness, appears
in their most complacential self-appro-
bation, under so direful a transform-
ing change, from Man, into *part*
Brute, part Devil. Others feel in
themselves some Disaffections and Di-
stempers of Spirit, which they de-
plore,

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plore, lament, and contend against
These Men glory in their own shame
 and what ought to make them a his-

*--- Populus mi-
 hi sibilas.*

sing, and reproach to the
 Nations of the Earth
 they applaud them for

Declare their Sin, as Sodom; justify
 the prodigious Deformities of their
 own Spirits; write Volumes to defend
 them, and put on a Countenance, un-
 accustomed to blushing, as if in good
 earnest, they expected other Men
 should think their Cause to be good.
 And to what a stupendous height doth
 this raise the *Horror of their Case!*

But hence also it is, that the Devil
 hath that access to the inward parts,
 into the more secret Receptacles, and
 Chambers of their Souls; unto which
 he could have none, if their *consenting*
Will did not open him the Door.
 Not that there is any *formal Bargain*,
 or Contract between him and them.
 For his *Power*, you find, *works in*
darkness: But he and they agree up-
 on the same things; so doth the
Devil lead them captive at his will,
 2 Tim. 2. 26. The

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The Sufferers, in the mean time, are only such; and as they endure Evils, in themselves, incomparably less, they do but endure them, not being active to procure them otherwise than by being and doing what they ought.

And so they have, *in their Suffering, that great matter of Relief and Rejoycing, the Testimony of their Conscience, 2 Cor. 1. 12.* Besides the expectation of a *glorious Reward*: while for the *Authors* of their Sufferings, is reserved *the blackness of darkness for ever, Jud. 13.*

Which leads to the Consideration of

2dly. *Their Doom*, (for hitherto we had chiefly considered but *their Character*) and this is { partly present
partly final.

1. *Present*, That, for this cause [God sends them] *strong Delusions*, 2 Thess. 2. 11. not by *active Infusion* of Malignity; whereof, *on God's part* there was *no possibility*, nor on *their part*, any need. They have enough of their own, besides the addition, of

D

what

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what *that Text* notes, that their *coming is after the working of Satan, with all Power.*

These are a sort of Men abandon'd of God, delivered over to Satan, under whose Conduct they have put themselves. A fearful Case! They are, not by *Divine Commission*, but *Permission* only, left in his Hands. And now, *the lusts of their Father they will do*, John 8. 44.

2. *Final: That they all might be damned*—— A severe Sentence! but justified by what went before, [because *they received not the love of the truth, they might be saved*; [but struck off from the *Christian Religion* what should make it amiable and self-recommending. And by what follows, that] *they took pleasure in Unrighteousness.*] Hence they are left of God, in order to their future Damnation. Not that God made any Men on purpose to damn them, but when they had contracted such Guilt, by sinning against the *clearest Light*, against the *Law of their own Nature*, and against
the

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the Law of Christ, they are damned, as having mark'd themselves out for Hell, and the Society of Devils, whose Associates and Subjects they were before. And if it be said of them that do evil that good may come [*their Damnation is just*] much more of them that love mischief for mischiefs sake.

And who would not now chuse the Tortures of a flaming Fire for an Hour or two, rather than be turned into Hell, to endure infernal Flames for ever !

And we may add, to shew how much greater this *Spiritual Deliverance* is, than *Deliverance from the External Powers of Darknes*s, that the fearful Tragedies that these Men act, being by the so manifest and immediate Power of the Devil, he is therefore most highly gratified, by having his Will so far of them. Nothing could be more grateful to him, than to have made them his Tools, his Instruments, to fill the *World*, and the *Christian Church*, with such Miseries, and Calamities, as they are the voluntary

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Authors of. And hereupon they will be the Subjects of his Triumph and Scorn at last. And here if you would but pause a little, and consider, what would not I rather chuse, than to be the subject of the Scorn and Insultation of Devils! This is the case of this very Generation of Men. How will the Devils insult over them? See what Fools I have made of so great a part of Mankind, how ready have they been to serve me, and my most horrid Designs? There is nothing that I would have them believe, be it never so absurd, but I could make them believe it; there is nothing so horrid to act, but if I bid them, they are ready to act it! And how much the greater will the matter of their Insultation be, that such could be found, even in the Christian World, that should be made to serve his vile and horrid purposes, and so render *Christianity* hateful to Mankind! How hath the *extent* and growth of it, by this means, been hindered! And it can never spread, till it have another kind of
Repre-

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Representation, than is given by this sort of Men.

And consider, that, in opposition to what was last mentioned, from the *Spiritual Power* of the Devil, which he acts in this Darkness, all the sincere are truly, and shall be fully delivered; whereas from his *External Power* they are many times not delivered. It is not ascertained to them, that they shall not be impoverish'd, that they shall not be cast into Prison, that they shall not be put to Death; but it is certain, that Satan is dethroned in their Souls, and that God will bruise him under their Feet shortly, and they shall have opportunity and ground for Eternal Triumph over all his Power and Malice.

Therefore, upon all these accounts, this must be far the more eligible Deliverance. Tho' Deliverance in the former kind, is by no means to be made light of. They that are sincere are sure at last of a most glorious Victory over the Devil. They shall overcome him by the Blood of the Lamb,

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and by the Word of his Testimony; not having loved their Lives unto the Death. And that is certainly the most desirable course and state, that hath the most desirable and valuable end.

And according hereto should the temper of our Spirits be, in reference to such Deliverance from the Power of Darkness, which we have occasion to make mention of this day. We ought to remember with great gratitude our Preservation from *those Efforts of this Power*, wherein it is exercised with reference to the external secular Concernments of particular Persons, and of Nations, more especially *our own*. We have reason to bless God for that Deliverance that hath been wrought out for us in that kind, and that it hath been so often repeated, and so long continued. We ought to take much to heart the Mercies of God herein. And altho' we are here met under somewhat a *distinct Character*, to bear a part in the Solemn Thanksgivings of this Day; we are
not

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not the less obliged to be very serious herein: And however, have for our part, great reason not to expect any thing hard or grievous from such, differing from us, as understand Religion; between whom and us, there is an agreement in all the *Substantials* thereof. We have the *same Articles of Doctrine*, the *same Institutions of Worship*, and the *same Rules of Life, Conversation*, and *Practice* towards our *Sovereign* and *Fellow-Subjects*. And when there is so *great an Agreement*, that which is left to be the matter of *Disagreement*, can be only very little circumstantial things; and which they from whom we differ professedly call indifferent, not tending, therefore, *in themselves*, to make either *better Men*, or *better Christians*. And where-as some of us *do not think so, throughout*; that *Disagreement*, is, we hope, the rather to be pardoned, both because it is *little, so little*, that there are few Men of *considering Minds*, that, upon strict enquiry, and comparing of Thoughts, will not be found

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to differ in much greater things ; and very consistently with most entire mutual Love, or at least, no design of hurt to each other. And yet the difference is *real* and not to be dissembled, nor thrown off at pleasure, it being in no Man's power that would *keep a Conscience void of offence towards God and Man*, to form his Judgment, this way or that, as he will.

And whereas there are *Churches abroad*, and *at home*, wherewith we agree, and from which we differ, in these smaller things ; we are not willing quite to dis-joyn our selves from *either sort*, in which the *Substance* is visible of our *Common Religion* : For they are *in their nature, and kind, one and the same*. Nor can we apprehend how a *Church*, or a *Society* formed for the purposes of *Religion*, can be *constituted*, and *distinguished*, for sole Communion, *with that, and no other*, by *such things* as are confessed on all hands, to be no parts of Religion ; nor to have any necessary connection with it.

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The more *truly Catholick* the Communion of *Christians* is, it is the more *truly Christian*.

There is a *mental Communion*, which is more intimate, than *meerly local*; which yet, we cannot have, with them with whom we judge it unlawful to have *actual, local Communion*, if there be occasion. But one may have *both*, wheresoever *the Essentials of Christianity* do appear; not subverted by the addition of *other things*, that are inconsistent with any of *those Essentials*: As the case is with them, whose *black Character* hath been given in *this Discourse*.

But tho' we are not to expect hard things from Friends, we are to remember the same *common Enemy* to *them* and *us*, is still in being, and hath great power in the World, and that *Prince of Darkness* that animates them is still powerful, and as full of Mischief as ever. And we know not what advantages our too common Iniquities may, from the Justice of a Righteous God, give the common Enemy

nemy against us, whereupon we have no reason to be secure. If things therefore should be brought to that state, that *Smithfield Fires* should be kindled again, so as that we shall not be delivered from *that sort* of the *Powers of Darknes*, let us labour to get into that *good state*, as to be able to bless God, even in the midst of *Flames*, that we are delivered from the *worst sort of the Powers of Darknes*; that the Prince of this World is dethroned in our Souls; that he is judged there. And let us labour to have that temper of Mind towards such as may be the *Authors* of those *Sufferings* to us, that our Love towards them may not be extinguish'd. Labour that every one of us may say from our Hearts, *Let them discover what hatred they will towards me, God forbid that I should not exercise true Love towards them. If they curse me, I will bless them: If they despitefully use me, and persecute me, I will pray for them.*

But

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But we have also the *second part* of the *Text* to be briefly reflected upon. *Who hath delivered us from the Power of Darkness, [and translated us into the Kingdom of his dear Son.]*

Our present Limits allow us not to enlarge upon *this part*. And it cannot but be thought reasonable, that *this Occasion* being Monthly, and often considered, *the other* but Annual, and rarely returning, we should choose to insist more largely upon it.

But how great a Privilege is this Translation! and how amazing! that it should be represented to us by so endearing an Expression! Because my Son is dear to me, I will take you into his Kingdom. He is not so dear to me, but I can be very well contented to make you partakers of all the Blessings that his Kingdom carries in it.

And you know that there is no Kingdom but what hath its particular Laws, and Statutes, and Ordinances, and Privileges belonging to it. There is one great Ordinance belonging to this Kingdom of our Lord's, that

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that we are solemnly to attend the next Lord's Day. If we look upon our selves as not only *delivered from the Power of Darkneſs*, but *translated into the Kingdom of God's dear Son*, this is indeed a great Privilege; but there is no ſuch Privilege, which hath not its Duty belonging to it. We ought to conſider how we ſhall carry the matter upon this Translation, being translated into the *Kingdom of God's dear Son*; and being to partake in the Privileges that belong to his Kingdom, how ſhall we deport our ſelves ſuitably hereto, with what temper of Spirit?

I. With an admiring temper of Spirit, conſidering the ſtate out of which we are delivered. He hath delivered us from the *Power of Darkneſs*. *He hath turned us from Darkneſs to Light, and from the Power of Satan unto God*. This is that I am ſent for, ſaith the Apoſtle Paul, as a Goſpel Miniſter, *Acts 26. 18. To open your Eyes, and turn you from Darkneſs to Light, and from the Power of Sa-*

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an unto God. Then into what a transport should it put us, to think that we should have been under the Power of the Devil unto this very Day, the Power of the Prince of the Air that works in the Children of Disobedience, that works *energetically*, as the word signifies, his work in them hath an Energy in it, *Ephes. 2. 2.* Oh frightful thought! to have such an horrid Fiend lying continually in my Bosom, preying upon the very Vitals of my Soul, leading me captive at his Will! What the Devil would have me be and do, that I was and did most readily!

2. We should recount with great Thanksgiving our admission into *this Kingdom*. Think we first, *Whence* we are delivered, and then into what state we are admitted, into the Kingdom of *his dear Son*. Into what an adoring thankful Frame should that put us, that our Blessed God should translate us into his *own Son's Kingdom*! You shall hereupon be so provided

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provided and cared for, as none else in the World are besides. He will watch over *your Spirits*, your *Souls* shall be bound up in the bundle of Life; you shall have all the Supports, and Comforts too, that in infinite Wisdom and Love he shall judge necessary for you, in this World, and at length be brought into the presence of the Divine Glory with exceeding great joy!

3. Consider, that the particular Ordinances of this Kingdom of his are aptly design'd for your advantage. This that we are now to prepare for is an Ordinance belonging to that Kingdom. *I appoint unto you a Kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me*, saith our Lord, Luk. 22. 29, 30. *that you may eat and drink at my Table, in my Kingdom.* We are to eat and drink with him in his Kingdom; and that Ordinance wherein we are to eat and drink with him, is the Emblem of what is there finally designed, and meant, when we are to *sit down with Abraham, Isaac,*

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Isaac, and Jacob in the Kingdom of God.

4. We should consider, what *Faith* is required on our part, being come into such a Kingdom, and having the Privileges thereof secured unto us, by such a sealing Ordinance. There ought to be no dubious thought of him, who so kindly invites us, especially when we are so in so friendly a way eating and drinking together.

5. It is to be considered, what *Fidelity* is required of us. We are to swear Fealty to the King of this Kingdom. Never let it be said, we that eat and drink at his Table, *have lift up our Heel against him.*

6. With *what Joy* should we consider our State, in our approach to such an Ordinance. We are received as Friends, to the King's Table. Let Israel *rejoyce in him that made him*; let the Children of Zion *rejoyce in their King*, Psal. 149. 2. *Rejoyce greatly, O Daughter of Zion; shout, O Daughter of Jerusalem, thy King cometh,* Zech.

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Zech. 9. 9. meek and lowly. How infinitely condescending, when he treats such as we for his welcome Guests!

And take both the parts of the *Text* together, and they will give us this twofold hint of *Use*.

I. Consider how solicitous we ought to be till we know that we are got out of that dark and horrid Kingdom, and brought into this Kingdom of Light and Grace. When we know that these two Kingdoms divide the World, and how fearful a thing it is to belong to the former, and how desirable a thing to belong to the latter Kingdom; who would not be solicitous till he knows that he is got out of that horrid Kingdom, into this blisful One, and into so safe and happy a State? And how stupid negligence is it, not to know, or be concerned, to what Kingdom I belong? Dost thou not know who is thy King? Whether the dear Son of God, or to that accursed King? I hope you will labour

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labour not long to be ignorant in a matter of so great concern, but drive it to a speedy issue.

2. With reference to both these, If you have a comfortable ground to hope that you *are delivered from the Power of Darknes, and translated into the Kingdom of God's dear Son*, be serious in your Thanksgivings, and endeavour to arrive at greater degrees of Gratitude, that your Hearts may be more warm and rais'd in your Thanksgivings. And such Thanksgivings ought to be gratefully exprest in acts of Mercy to the Poor and Needy. *Blessed are the Merciful, for they have received Mercy, and shall receive it.*

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